

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

STATEMENTS BY EDWIN MEESE, III
COUNSELLOR TO THE PRESIDENT,
ADMIRAL BOBBY INMAN,
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE,
RICHARD WILLARD, COUNSEL TO THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR INTELLIGENCE POLICY
FOLLOWED BY
BACKGROUND BRIEFING
BY
SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

The Briefing Room

December 4, 1981

1:45 P.M. EST

STATEMENT BY EDWIN MEESE, III: Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great satisfaction that the President has signed a new executive order designated to direct the activities of the American intelligence community, and a separate order reestablishing the Intelligence Oversight Board.

As you know, the President as a part of his program to rebuild our national security capacity indicated one of the points would be to enhance the foreign intelligence capacity, and that's what's being done in this order being signed today, that has been signed today.

The order directing the intelligence community has been carefully drafted to protect the rights of all American citizens while giving our intelligence organizations clear guidelines within which to do their difficult and essential jobs. This order will help end the disputes and controversies which did much to damage both the confidence of the American people in their intelligence agencies and the ability of those agencies to function effectively.

This order has been carefully weighed. There were those who suggested that the previous order could have been left in place. The President disagreed with that viewpoint, feeling that the old order was demeaning and unnecessarily restrictive towards our intelligence community. He believes, as I do, that it is essential to have a new and more positive order which will carry our intelligence agencies and direct them through the 1980s and beyond.

I want to assure you that under this order no intelligence agency of the United States or any other agency, for that matter, will be given authority to violate the rights and liberties guaranteed to all Americans by our Constitution and laws. The provisions of this executive order make this abundantly clear as does the reestablishment of the Intelligence Oversight Board. In producing these orders our people have worked closely with the Senate and House intelligence committees and I want to thank them for the comments and assistance that they have given during the developmental process.

You have all been given the President's statement issued